

Economic Development Region 4: West Central

Covering the following counties:

Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail,
Pope, Stevens, Traverse, and Wilkin

2021 REGIONAL PROFILE

Updated August 2021

**Regional Analysis & Outreach Unit
Northwest Minnesota**

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Web: <http://mn.gov/deed/data/>

<https://mn.gov/deed/data/regional-lmi/>

<https://mn.gov/deed/data/regional-lmi/northwest-lmi.jsp>

DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION CHANGE

Economic Development Region 4-West Central (EDR 4-West Central) is a mostly rural, nine-county region located in the west central area of the state, bordering North Dakota. Clay County is a part of the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area, and Douglas County and Otter Tail County are both micropolitan statistical areas. EDR 4 was the sixth largest of 13 economic development regions (EDRs) in the state, accounting for 4.1% of the state's total population. It was also the largest of the four EDR's in Northwest Minnesota. The regional population increased by 5.0%, or nearly 11,000 residents, from 2010 to 2020, compared to a 6.7% rise statewide (Table 1).

	2010 Population	2020 Estimates	2010-2020 Change	
			Number	Percent
Region 4-West Central	221,688	232,662	+10,974	+5.0%
Becker Co.	32,504	34,456	+1,952	+6.0%
Clay Co.	58,999	64,690	+5,691	+9.6%
Douglas Co.	36,009	38,328	+2,319	+6.4%
Grant Co.	6,018	6,026	+8	+0.1%
Otter Tail Co.	57,303	58,741	+1,438	+2.5%
Pope Co.	10,995	11,277	+282	+2.6%
Stevens Co.	9,726	9,765	+39	+0.4%
Traverse Co.	3,558	3,218	-340	-9.6%
Wilkin Co.	6,576	6,161	-415	-6.3%
Northwest Minnesota	553,805	571,239	+17,434	+3.1%
State of Minnesota	5,303,925	5,657,342	+353,417	+6.7%

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates](#)

The four largest counties in the region – Becker, Clay, Douglas, and Otter Tail – all saw population growth since 2010, while the five smaller counties lost population or witnessed small population gains. Clay, the largest and fastest growing county in the region, increased by 9.6%, making it the 8th fastest growing county (of 87) in the state. Otter Tail grew at a much slower rate of 2.5%, but was still home to 58,741 residents.

COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE

The recent population increase in EDR 4 was fueled primarily by a net migration of 10,340 people from 2010 to 2019 with domestic migration of 4,382 and international migration of 2,073. These increases were supplemented by natural increase – more births than deaths – of 4,041 people (Table 2).

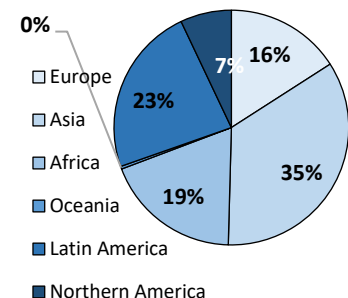
With the in-migration, Region 4 was now home to 6,388 foreign born residents, or 2.8% of the total population. The largest number of immigrants in the region came from Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Europe (Figure 1). However the fastest increase in immigrants came from Asia and Africa, which grew by 50% since 2010.

	Total Change	Natural Increase	Vital Events		Net Migration		
			Births	Deaths	Total	Inter- national	Domestic
Region 4	+10,340	+4,041	25,367	21,326	+6,455	+2,073	+4,382
Minnesota	+335,705	+250,488	637,356	386,868	+88,161	+114,414	-26,253

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program](#)

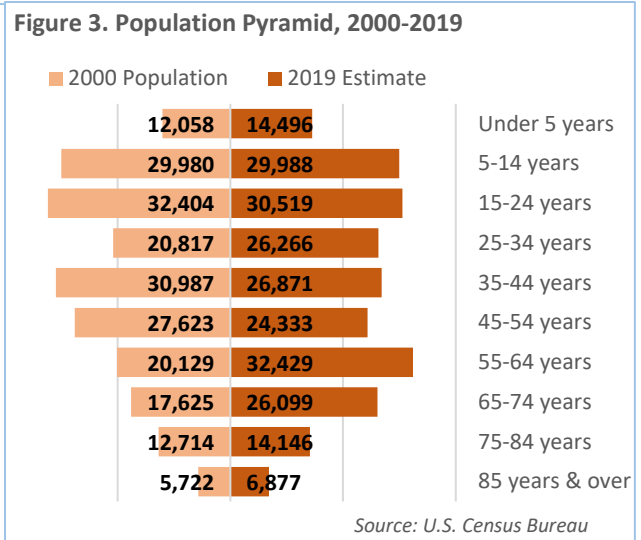
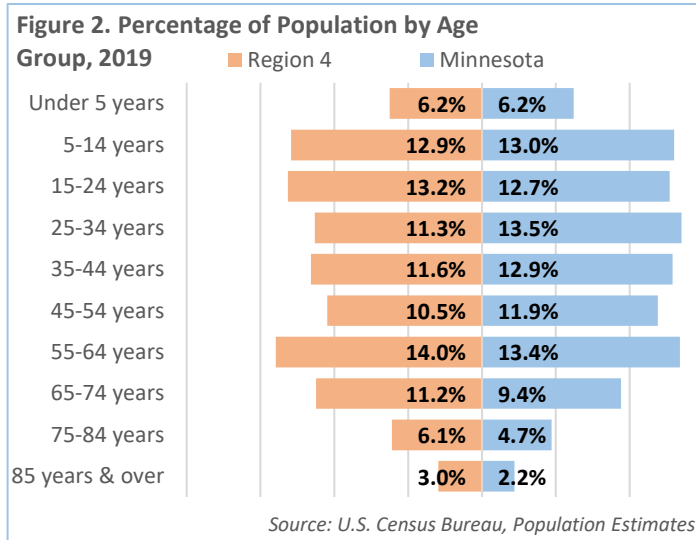
Based on year of entry, Region 4's foreign born population was "newer" than the rest of the state. About 36% of the region's immigrants entered the U.S. 2010 or later, compared to just 27.6% statewide. However, the region had nearly the same percentage of Foreign-born residents who had entered before 1990 as the state. Foreign-born residents have a younger age profile than the native born population, with 43.1% being between 15 and 34 years of age, compared to 26.6% of the total population. While a similar percentage of foreign-born residents had a bachelor's degree or higher than native born residents, immigrants were also much more likely to have less than a high school diploma.

Figure 2. Place of Birth for the Foreign Born Population, 2019



POPULATION BY AGE GROUP

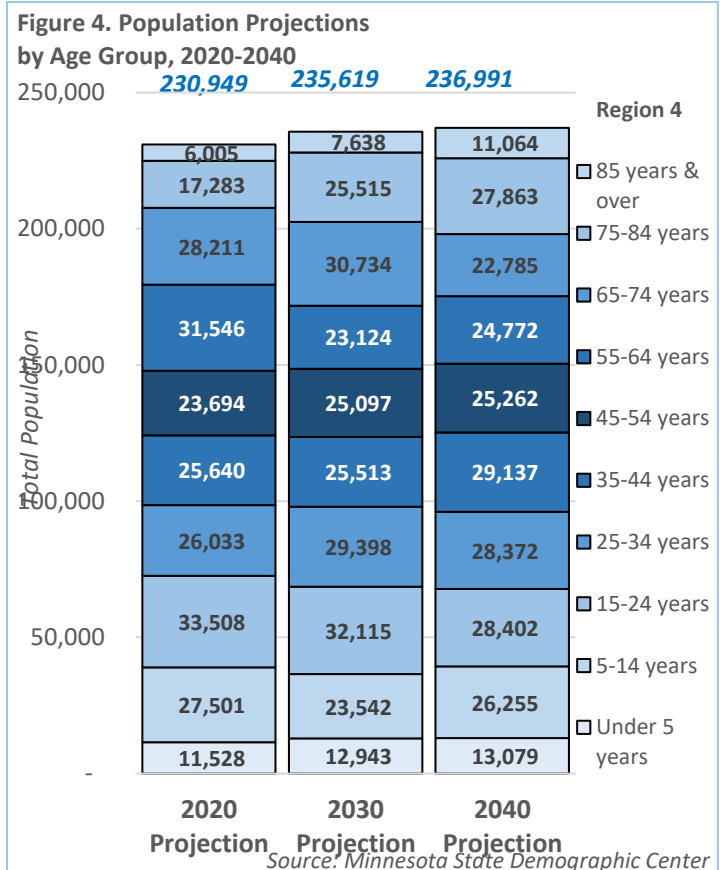
In EDR 4-West Central, over one-third (34.3%) of the regional population is over the age of 55, compared to 29.7% statewide. In contrast, EDR 4 had a smaller percentage of people in the 25 to 54 year age group – typically considered the “prime working years”. A large portion of the population is a part of the Baby Boom generation, which is creating a significant shift in regional demographics over time. Between 2000 and 2019, the region gained over 23,000 residents 55 years of age or older. Still, 13.2% of the population is 15-24 years of age, a higher rate than the proportion statewide (Figure 2 and 3).



POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY AGE GROUP

EDR 4-West Central is projected to continue its population increase in the near future. Population projections from the [Minnesota State Demographic Center](#) show that the area is expected to gain over 6,000 residents from 2020 to 2040, a 2.6% increase (see Figure 4). In comparison, the projected growth statewide from 2020 to 2040 is approximately 8.8%.

Still, the projected population change varies by age. The region is expected to add residents between the ages of 25 and 54, and a corresponding increase in young children. Conversely, major losses are expected to occur in the age groups from 55 to 74 years, as the Baby Boom generation ages out of those cohorts. However, this will also lead to over 15,000 more residents aged 75 years and over, a 67.2% expansion.



POPULATION BY RACE

The population in EDR 4 has had significant changes since the turn of the century, but remains less diverse than the state as a whole. In 2019, almost 93% of the region's residents reported white alone as their race, compared to 82.8% of residents statewide. However, every minority race except for those who identified as Some Other Race increased faster than the white population from 2000 to 2019. In fact, the number of Black or African American residents more than tripled since 2000, and those of Hispanic or Latino origin and Two or More Races increased by more than 100% (see Table 3).

Table 3. Race and Hispanic Origin, 2019	EDR 4 – West Central			Minnesota	
	Number	Percent	Change from 2000-2019	Percent	Change from 2000-2019
Total	229,539	100.0%	+9.3%	100.0%	+13.1%
White	213,278	92.9%	+6.3%	82.8%	+4.7%
Black or African American	3,814	1.7%	+453.6%	6.4%	+107.6%
American Indian & Alaska Native	4,451	1.9%	+23.0%	1.0%	+5.5%
Asian & Other Pacific Islander	1,901	0.8%	+68.2%	4.9%	+87.8%
Some Other Race	1,611	0.7%	+1.9%	1.9%	+58.1%
Two or More Races	4,484	2.0%	+91.8%	3.0%	+99.9%
Hispanic or Latino	7,291	3.2%	+103.0%	5.4%	+108.9%

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates

As the largest region in Northwest Minnesota, EDR 4 has the highest number of non-white residents in the planning region. This includes over 4,400 American Indian residents, almost 4,500 people who identify as Two or More Races, and 7,300 residents of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

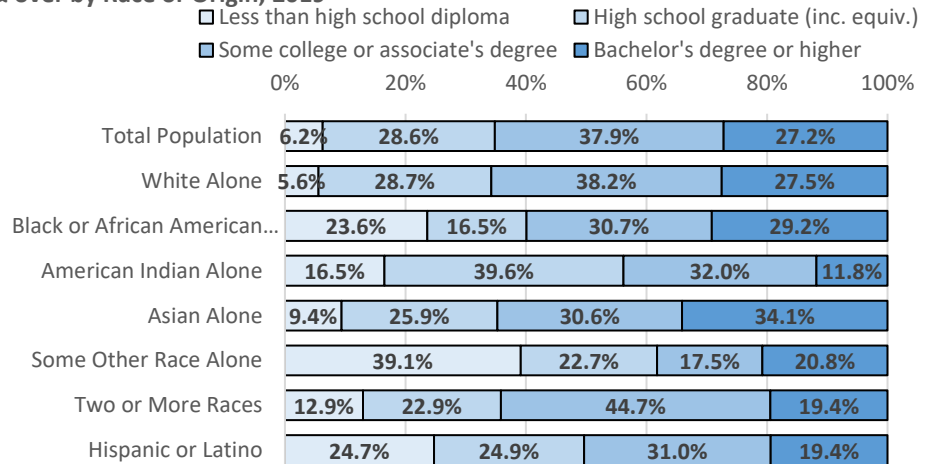
With 40.2% of adults aged 18 years and over holding a college degree, EDR 4 had lower educational attainment than the state in 2017, where 44.4% of adults have an associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree. In contrast, the region had a higher percentage of people with some college but no degree, and a high school diploma or less. Regional education attainment only exceeded the state in associate's degrees (Table 4).

Table 4. Educational Attainment for the Adult Population, 2019	EDR 4-West Central		Minnesota
	Number	Percent	Percent
Total, 18 years & over	177,235	100.0%	100.0%
Less than high school	12,204	6.9%	7.5%
High school grad. (incl. equiv.)	50,289	28.4%	25.0%
Some college, no degree	43,569	24.6%	23.1%
Associate's degree	27,094	15.3%	10.9%
Bachelor's degree	31,640	17.9%	22.5%
Advanced degree	12,439	7.0%	11.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Educational attainment varies significantly by race and ethnicity in EDR 4-West Central. Around 24% of Black or African American, Two or More Races, and Hispanic or Latino residents had less than a high school diploma, compared to just 5.6% of White residents. However, over 30% of Black or African Americans, American Indians, and people of Two or More Races have attended some college or earned an associate's degree (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Educational Attainment for the population aged 25 years & over by Race or Origin, 2019



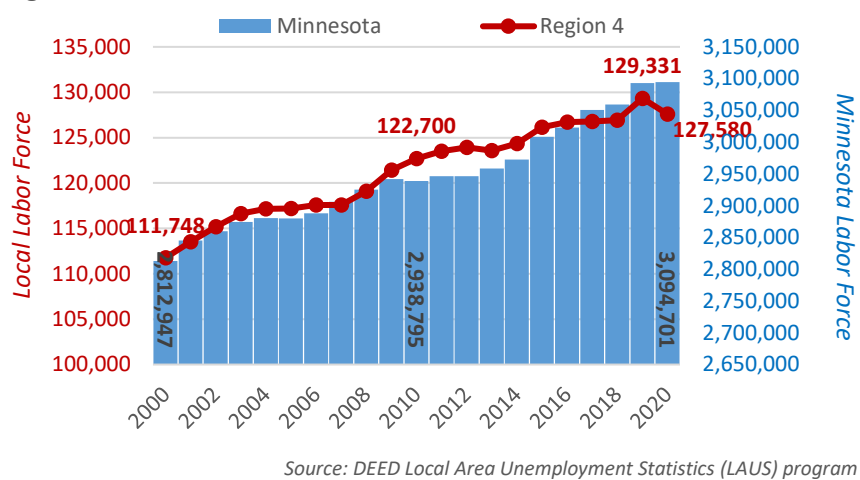
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey

LABOR FORCE

LABOR FORCE CHANGE

According to data from DEED's [Local Area Unemployment Statistics](#) program, EDR 4 had an annual average labor force count of nearly 127,580 workers through 2020. The regional labor force has increased on a steady path since 2000, adding nearly 16,000 new workers since then. In addition, the regional labor force added workers every year since 2013, and reached new peaks for six straight years. Then the labor force declined by nearly 2,000 workers due to the pandemic in 2020 (Figure 6).

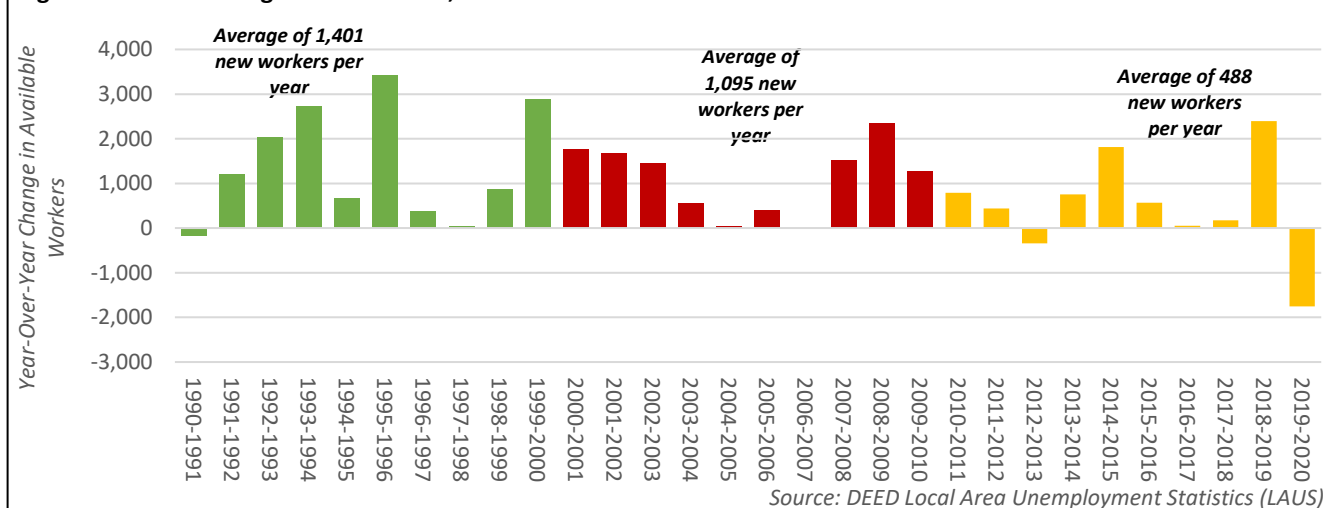
Figure 6. Annual Labor Force Estimates, 2000-2020



Prior to that, the size of the labor force in EDR 4 fluctuated more, dropping slightly in 2007, before growing sharply as the recession took hold. From 2007 to 2012, the region added over 6,000 workers. Despite consistent gains, the labor market in EDR 4 continues to tighten, with fewer unemployed workers available and actively seeking work. This is likely to also have a continued effect on the regional economy.

After averaging a net gain of about 1,950 additional labor force participants per year between 1990 and 2000, Region 4 employers were able to tap into a large and growing pool of talented workers. However, from 2010 to 2020, Region 4's labor force growth was much slower, adding only an average of 488 new workers per year (Figure 7). Increasingly tight labor markets and a growing scarcity of workers is now recognized as one of Region 4's most significant barriers to future economic growth. In the face of these constraints, it has become evident that a more diverse workforce in terms of age, gender, race, ethnicity, disability status, and immigration has been and will continue to be a vital source of the workers that employers need to succeed. As the White, native-born workforce continues to age, younger workers of different races or from different countries will comprise the fastest growing segment of the labor force.

Figure 7. Annual Change in Labor Force, 1990-2020



LABOR FORCE PROJECTIONS

Despite the projected population increase in EDR 4-West Central shown in Figure 4, the regional labor force is expected to contract some from 2020 to 2030. Applying current labor force participation rates to future population projections by age group creates labor force projections for the region, which show a 1.2% loss in workforce numbers, as more of the Baby Boom generation leaves the labor force. The projected decline estimates a loss in the number of teenaged and entry-level workers and workers aged 55 to 64 years by 2030, against smaller gains among those 65 years and over. However, the number of workers in their 'prime-working years' (25 to 54) should increase by over 4,000. Being used to labor force growth, the anticipated contraction may lead employers to adapt their hiring and management practices in order to compete (Table 5).

Table 5. EDR 4-West Central Labor Force Projections

	2020 Labor Force Projection	2030 Labor Force Projection	2020-2030 Change	
			Numeric	Percent
16 to 19 years	6,911	6,451	-460	-6.7%
20 to 24 years	15,424	15,096	-328	-2.1%
25 to 44 years	46,423	49,332	+2,909	+6.3%
45 to 54 years	20,592	21,812	+1,219	+5.9%
55 to 64 years	23,238	17,034	-6,204	-26.7%
65 to 74 years	7,773	8,468	+695	+8.9%
75 years & over	1,559	2,219	+660	+42.4%
Total Labor Force	121,921	120,413	-1,508	-1.2%

Source: calculated from Minnesota State Demographic Center population projections and 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

With 66.2% of the population 16 years of age and older in the labor force, EDR 4-West Central had a much lower labor force participation rate than the state overall. However, residents in their 'prime working years' (25 to 44 years) actually had higher labor force participation rates than those statewide. Conversely, those aged 20 to 24 years and 55 to 64 years had lower labor force participation in EDR 4 than statewide (Table 6).

Labor force participation rates vary by race in EDR 4, and often lag behind statewide rates. Those of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity participated more in EDR 4 but had higher unemployment rates in the region. Black or African Americans had similar labor force participation rates in the region to the state but unemployment was more than doubled in the region.

There were almost 4,500 veterans and over 6,100 workers with disabilities in the regional labor force. In sum, unemployment rates were highest among young workers, Black or African Americans, American Indians, and workers with disabilities.

Table 6. EDR 4-West Central Employment Characteristics, 2019

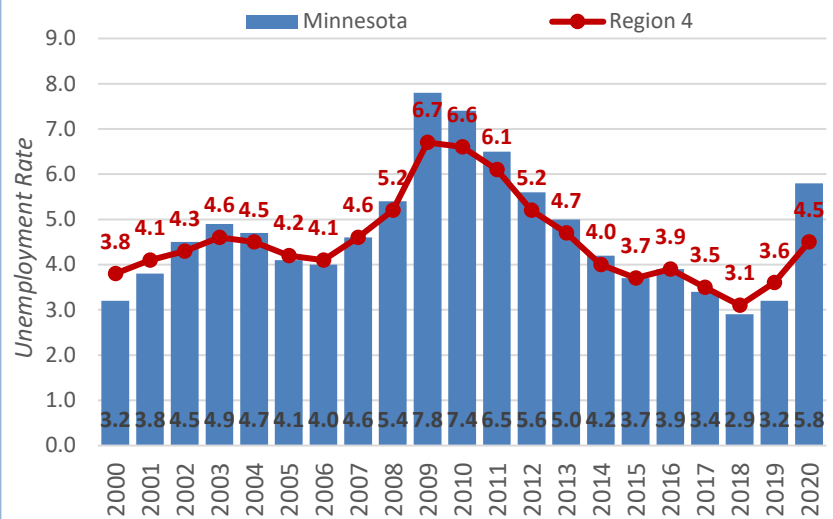
Age Group	EDR 4 – West Central			Minnesota	
	Labor Force	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate
Total Labor Force	121,082	66.2%	3.3%	69.7%	3.6%
16 to 19 years	6,987	57.5%	10.3%	53.2%	11.0%
20 to 24 years	12,875	83.5%	4.4%	84.6%	6.0%
25 to 44 years	46,729	89.8%	3.4%	88.8%	3.2%
45 to 54 years	22,426	86.9%	2.6%	87.6%	2.7%
55 to 64 years	24,071	73.7%	2.7%	73.0%	2.8%
65 to 74 years	6,666	27.6%	3.5%	27.9%	2.2%
75 years & over	1,374	6.7%	3.0%	6.6%	2.4%
Employment Characteristics by Gender					
Male	63,997	70.3%	3.7%	73.5%	4.1%
Female	57,132	62.3%	2.0%	65.9%	3.1%
Employment Characteristics by Race & Hispanic Origin					
White alone	114,178	66.4%	2.9%	69.3%	3.0%
Black or African American	1,796	71.3%	18.2%	71.3%	8.8%
American Indian & Alaska Native	1,703	52.6%	8.4%	58.9%	12.6%
Asian or Other Pacific Islanders	976	63.6%	4.4%	71.2%	4.3%
Some Other Race	956	77.8%	8.2%	77.7%	6.1%
Two or More Races	1,523	66.8%	7.1%	73.6%	7.4%
Hispanic or Latino	3,558	77.8%	7.3%	76.5%	6.1%
Employment Characteristics by Disability					
With Any Disability	6,171	52.9%	5.2%	53.0%	8.6%
Employment Characteristics by Educational Attainment					
Population 25 to 64 years	93,220	84.4%	2.5%	84.5%	3.0%
Less than H.S. Diploma	3,423	63.8%	3.8%	66.3%	4.2%
H.S. Diploma or Equivalent	21,403	79.3%	1.7%	78.5%	2.6%
Some College or Assoc. Degree	39,894	86.0%	2.5%	85.3%	3.0%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	28,509	89.7%	1.0%	90.0%	1.7%

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

According to the [Local Area Unemployment Statistics](#) program, the unemployment rate in EDR 4-West Central has trended closely with the state overall since 2000, regardless of the state of the economy. The unemployment rate in EDR 4 has consistently tracked within half a percent of the statewide rate, and shifted similarly to economic fluctuation. During the recession, it rose as high as 6.7% in 2009, but fell back to pre-recession rates by 2014. Since then, the regional rate has stabilized, staying between 3.0% and 4.0% prior to the pandemic. In 2020, the annual average unemployment rate was 4.5%, nearly a percentage point higher than a year before (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Unemployment Rates, 2000-2020

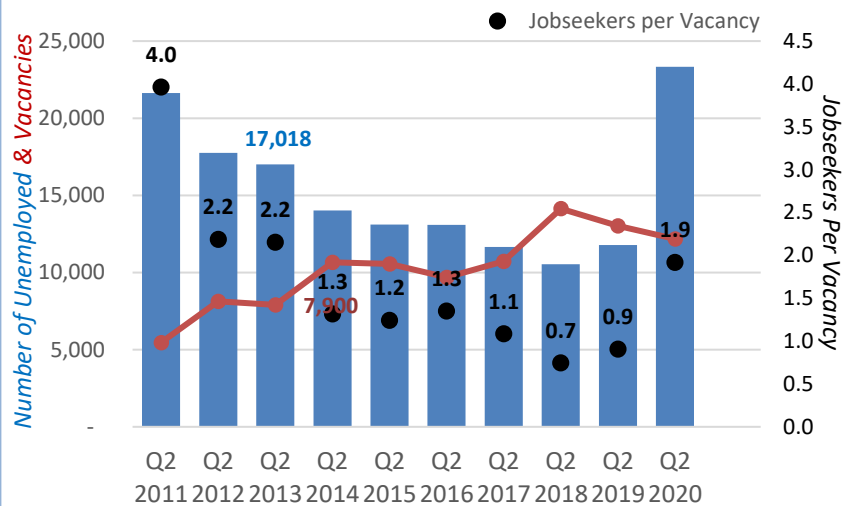


Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program

JOBSEEKERS PER VACANCY

After several years of hovering around a 1-to-1 jobseeker-per-vacancy ratio, the pandemic pushed the number of unemployed workers up and the number of vacancies down. The ratio rose to 1-to-1.9 in Region 4. According to recent job vacancy survey results, there were 12,180 openings reported by employers compared to 23,340 unemployed jobseekers in the region. However, that is still tighter than the Great Recession, when the ratio climbed as high as 7.7 jobseekers per vacancy during the recession in 2009 (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Jobseekers Per Vacancy, 2011-2020



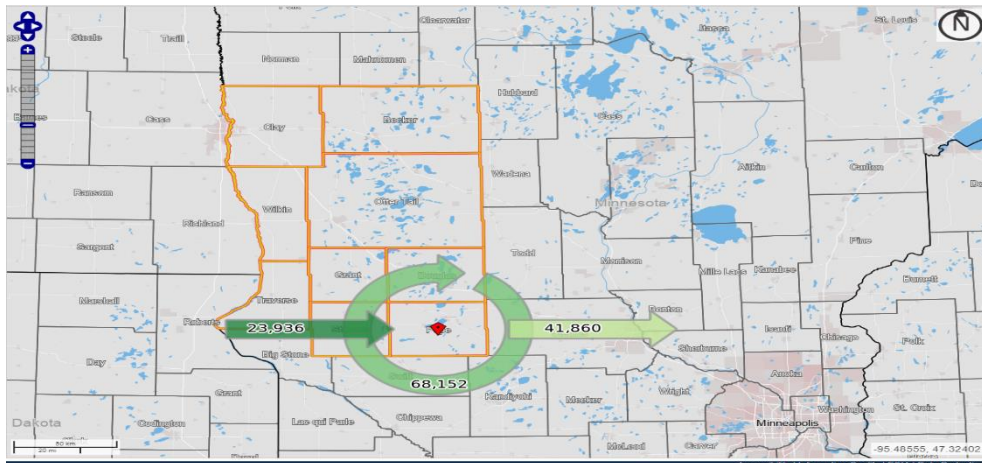
Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, LAUS program

COMMUTE SHED AND LABOR SHED

According to commuting data from the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), the vast majority – 62% – of workers who live in the region also work within the region. However, EDR 4 is a net exporter of labor, having fewer jobs than available workers. In 2018, 68,152 workers both lived and worked in EDR 4, while another 23,936 workers drove into the region for work. This is compared to 41,860 workers who lived in the region but drove to outside areas for work (Table 7 and Figure 10).

Table 7. EDR 4-West Central Inflow/ Outflow Job Counts (All Jobs), 2018	2018	
	Count	Share
Employed in the Selection Area	92,088	100.0%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	23,936	26.0%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	68,152	74.0%
Living in the Selection Area	110,012	100.0%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	41,860	38.1%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	68,152	61.9%

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap](#)

Figure 10. EDR 4-West Central Labor and Commute Shed, 2018

Otter Tail County is the largest employment center in the region and the biggest draw for workers, followed by Douglas and Clay Counties. Employers in the region draw workers from surrounding counties like Cass (ND), Todd, and Stearns County in the St. Cloud MSA. Workers also travel to

these same counties for work, as well as Wadena County, and Richland and Grand Forks Counties in North Dakota (Figure 10). The average commute time for workers the region was 19.0 minutes, compared to 23.7 minutes for workers statewide. About 61% of workers commuted less than 20 minutes each way, compared to 45.7% statewide. About 7.3% of workers worked at home, and 3.2% were able to walk to work. About half (55.3%) of workers left home between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.

INCOMES, WAGES AND OCCUPATIONS

HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

Household incomes were significantly lower in EDR 4 than the rest of the state. The median household income in West Central was \$61,565 in 2019, compared to \$71,306 in Minnesota. Less than half (40.7%) of the households in the region had incomes below \$50,000 in 2019, compared to 34.8% of households statewide. Only 9.1% of households had incomes greater than \$150,000 in the region (Figure 11).

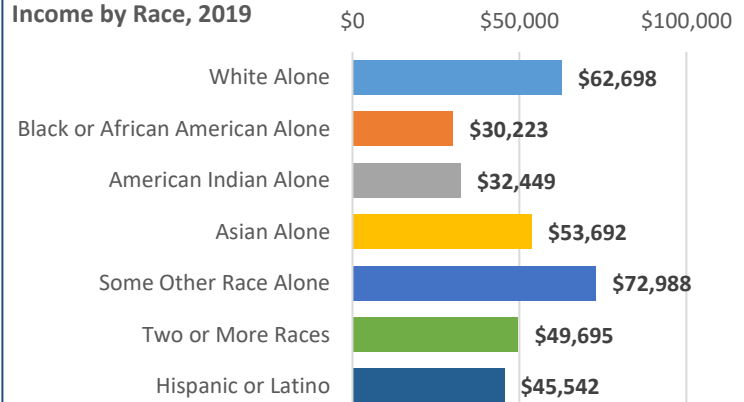
Median household incomes varied by race or origin in the region. Black or African American households reported the lowest incomes in Region 4, with a median income that was over \$32,000 lower than for White households. American Indian and Hispanic or Latino households also reported much lower median incomes. Meanwhile, Some Other Race households reported similar greater income than White households. However, sample sizes were small for several of the other race groups, leading to large margins of error and big swings compared to previous years (Figure 12).

Figure 11. Northwest Minnesota Household Incomes, 2019

Legend:
 ■ Less than \$25,000
 ■ \$25,000-\$49,999
 ■ \$50,000-\$74,999
 ■ \$75,000-\$99,999
 ■ \$100,000-\$149,999
 ■ \$150,000 or more

	Less than \$25,000	\$25,000-\$49,999	\$50,000-\$74,999	\$75,000-\$99,999	\$100,000-\$149,999	\$150,000 or more
Region 4	18.4%	22.3%	19.4%	14.9%	15.9%	9.1%
Minnesota	15.3%	19.5%	17.6%	14.2%	17.8%	15.6%

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 12. Northwest Minnesota Median Household Income by Race, 2019

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey

COST OF LIVING

According to DEED's [Cost of Living tool](#), the basic needs budget for an average Minnesota family (which consists of 2 adults and 1 child, with 1 full-time and 1 part-time worker) was \$58,800 in 2020. The cost of living for a similar family in EDR 4 was \$47,652 – which was the fourth lowest of the 13 economic development regions in the state. The highest monthly costs were for transportation, food, and housing; though the region's housing, child care, and taxes were significantly lower than the rest of the state. In order to meet the basic needs cost of living for the region, the two workers in the family scenario described would need to earn \$15.27 per hour working a combined 60 hours per week.

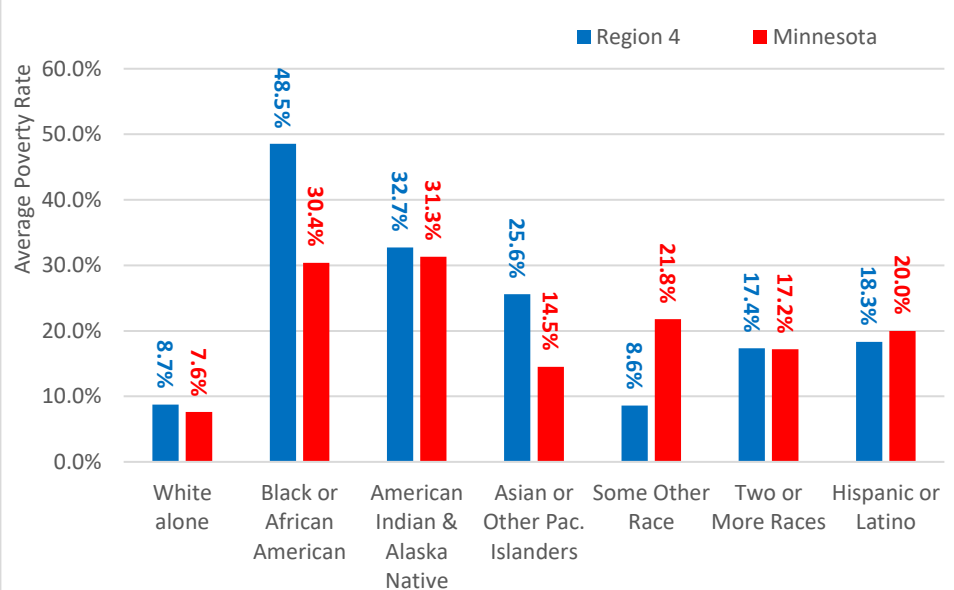
DEED's Cost of Living tool provides different estimates for household compositions including single people, partnered couples, and up to 4 children. For a single person living alone and working full-time, the estimated yearly cost in EDR 4 would be \$28,992, which would require an hourly wage of \$13.94 to meet the basic needs standard of living (Table 8).

Table 8. Family Yearly Cost, Worker Hourly Wage, and Family Monthly Costs, 2020										
Family Composition	Number of Workers	Yearly Cost of Living	Hourly Wage Required	Monthly Costs						
				Child Care	Food	Health Care	Housing	Trans- portation	Other	Taxes
EDR 4-West Central										
Single, 0 children	1 FT	\$28,992	\$13.94	\$0	\$350	\$163	\$607	\$711	\$262	\$323
Single, 1 child	1 FT	\$42,240	\$20.31	\$516	\$516	\$385	\$783	\$717	\$356	\$247
2 parents, 1 child	1 FT, 1 PT	\$47,652	\$15.27	\$258	\$798	\$519	\$783	\$828	\$433	\$352
2 parents, 2 children	2 FT	\$65,868	\$15.83	\$859	\$1,041	\$533	\$1,064	\$872	\$576	\$544
Minnesota										
Single, 0 children	1 FT	\$32,964	\$15.85	\$0	\$355	\$153	\$832	\$704	\$325	\$378
2 parents, 1 child	1 FT, 1 PT	\$58,800	\$18.85	\$546	\$810	\$549	\$1,069	\$819	\$515	\$592
Source: DEED Cost of Living tool										

Source: [DEED Cost of Living tool](#)

Overall, Region 4's poverty rate was 10.1%, which was similar to the statewide rate of 9.7%. Like incomes, poverty levels varied widely by race and origin. It was estimated that over 48% of the region's Black or African American population was below the poverty level in 2019, compared to just 8.7% of the white population. Likewise, poverty levels hovered around 30% for American Indians, and 20% for Asians, Two or More Races, and Hispanic or Latinos. In almost all cases, the region's poverty rate was higher than the state's poverty rate, except for Some Other Race and Hispanic or Latinos (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Percent Below the Poverty Level by Race or Origin, 2019



Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey

WAGES AND OCCUPATIONS

According to DEED's [Occupational Employment Statistics](#) program, the median hourly wage for all occupations in Region 4 was \$19.61 in the first quarter of 2021. West Central's median wage was \$3.39 below the state's median hourly wage, equaling 85.2% of the statewide wage rate, and \$5.32 below the median hourly wage in the Twin Cities metro area, which would amount to over \$11,000 per year for a full-time worker (Table 9). Based on location quotient, Region 4 stands out for having higher concentrations of education, training, and library, production, community and social service, and protective workers than the state. The largest occupations in the region include office and administrative support, education, training, and library, production, sales and related, and transportation and material moving positions.

	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment
Region 1 – Northwest	\$19.87	35,010
Region 2 – Headwaters	\$19.80	29,720
Region 3 – Arrowhead	\$20.49	132,720
Region 4 – West Central	\$19.61	78,570
Region 5 – North Central	\$18.19	64,670
Region 6E – SW Central	\$19.37	49,540
Region 6W – Upper MN Valley	\$19.11	15,520
Region 7E – East Central	\$21.84	48,790
Region 7W – Central	\$20.83	185,220
Region 8 – Southwest	\$18.79	51,340
Region 9 – South Central	\$19.76	99,840
Region 10 – Southeast	\$21.13	231,950
Region 11 – Twin Cities	\$24.93	1,697,060
State of Minnesota	\$23.00	2,708,760

Source: [DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics Qtr. 1 2021](#)

Not surprisingly, the lowest-paying jobs are concentrated in food prep and serving, building, grounds cleaning and maintenance, sales and related, personal care and service, and healthcare support, which tend to have lower educational and training requirements. For the most part, the gap in pay between Region 4 and the state is also much lower in these jobs (Table 10).

	Region 4-West Central				State of Minnesota		
	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment	Share of Total Employment	Location Quotient	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment	Share of Total Employment
Total, All Occupations	\$19.61	78,570	100.0%	1.0	\$23.00	2,708,760	100.0%
Office & Administrative Support	\$19.14	9,270	11.8%	0.9	\$20.93	338,050	12.5%
Sales & Related	\$14.94	8,500	10.8%	1.2	\$16.83	250,430	9.2%
Production	\$19.58	6,930	8.8%	1.2	\$19.82	202,240	7.5%
Education, Training & Library	\$25.13	6,060	7.7%	1.3	\$24.64	159,060	5.9%
Transportation & Material Moving	\$18.26	6,040	7.7%	1.0	\$18.83	209,210	7.7%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	\$12.39	5,920	7.5%	1.0	\$13.34	195,120	7.2%
Healthcare Support	\$14.88	4,850	6.2%	1.1	\$15.52	157,140	5.8%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$29.68	4,800	6.1%	0.9	\$36.90	188,210	6.9%
Construction & Extraction	\$22.76	4,400	5.6%	1.5	\$29.84	102,390	3.8%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	\$23.88	3,570	4.5%	1.2	\$25.45	98,840	3.6%
Management	\$43.45	3,510	4.5%	0.7	\$54.22	164,530	6.1%
Business & Financial Operations	\$28.37	2,680	3.4%	0.5	\$35.24	179,670	6.6%
Community & Social Service	\$22.66	2,360	3.0%	1.5	\$24.21	55,630	2.1%
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	\$15.70	2,250	2.9%	1.0	\$16.14	74,550	2.8%
Architecture & Engineering	\$31.73	1,450	1.8%	0.9	\$38.90	54,880	2.0%
Personal Care & Service	\$13.33	1,390	1.8%	0.9	\$14.57	51,660	1.9%
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	\$16.30	1,240	1.6%	1.2	\$25.72	36,260	1.3%
Protective Service	\$24.92	1,200	1.5%	1.0	\$24.18	42,520	1.6%
Computer & Mathematical	\$33.50	1,030	1.3%	0.4	\$44.89	98,240	3.6%
Life, Physical & Social Science	\$31.39	530	0.7%	0.7	\$35.48	26,120	1.0%
Legal	\$34.57	330	0.4%	0.6	\$41.02	19,760	0.7%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	\$17.37	280	0.4%	2.3	\$18.14	4,230	0.2%

Source: [DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, Qtr. 1 2021](#)

In contrast, the highest paying jobs are found in management, legal, architecture and engineering, computer and mathematical, healthcare practitioners, business and financial operations, and life, physical, and social science occupations, which all need higher levels of education and experience, including many that require postsecondary training. The pay gaps between the region and state are much bigger in these occupations often exceeding \$5.00 per hour – or \$10,000 per year for a full-time worker.

JOB VACANCY SURVEY

Employers in the 26-county Northwest Planning region reported 12,180 job vacancies in the second quarter of 2020, slightly less to the number of vacancies posted over the past second quarter surveys, which had a peak of 14,136 job vacancies in second quarter of 2018. Demand for workers was high across all industries, with the largest number of openings in retail trade (3,072 job vacancies), accommodation and food services (2,524 job vacancies), health care and social assistance (2,460 job vacancies), educational services (806 job vacancies), construction (767 job vacancies), and public administration (731 job vacancies).

With job vacancy increases, wages have risen with the median hourly wage offer from the current survey jumping to \$14.98 per hour, which was the highest wage offer in the history of the job vacancy survey. Wage offers ranged from just over \$11 per hour for personal care and food preparation and serving occupations to over \$21 per hour for healthcare practitioners, management, and community and social service occupations.

The largest number of vacancies were in sales and related, food preparation and serving related, building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, healthcare support and practitioner, and transportation and material moving occupations. Overall, 42% of the openings were part-time, 28% required post-secondary education, and 34% required 1 or more years of experience (Table 11). In sum, educational requirements in the region had been stable or declining over the past 5 years, while work experience requirements were relatively stable.

Table 11. Northwest Minnesota Job Vacancy Survey Results, 2nd Qtr. 2020

	Number of Total Vacancies	Percent Part-time	Percent Temporary or Seasonal	Requiring Post-Secondary Education	Requiring 1 or More Years of Experience	Requiring Certificate or License	Median Hourly Wage Offer
Total, All Occupations	12,180	42%	25%	28%	34%	39%	\$14.98
Sales & Related	1,439	53%	16%	7%	27%	5%	\$13.11
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	1,374	45%	40%	2%	9%	4%	\$15.70
Food Preparation & Serving Related	1,367	77%	16%	12%	13%	16%	\$11.20
Healthcare Support	1,290	66%	3%	49%	22%	65%	\$14.32
Transportation & Material Moving	1,158	44%	40%	7%	35%	48%	\$13.03
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	1,015	29%	5%	78%	42%	94%	\$21.42
Office & Administrative Support	785	22%	29%	9%	45%	14%	\$14.04
Construction & Extraction	687	2%	59%	16%	36%	34%	\$16.69
Education, Training & Library	551	48%	70%	86%	85%	77%	\$17.07
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	398	12%	22%	10%	66%	56%	\$18.19
Production	393	5%	6%	23%	34%	31%	\$15.15
Personal Care & Service	284	83%	44%	6%	8%	19%	\$12.55
Business & Financial Operations	280	3%	2%	79%	94%	73%	\$21.11
Management	209	4%	11%	53%	74%	47%	\$24.17
Community & Social Service	195	63%	10%	41%	39%	93%	\$14.20
Architecture & Engineering	166	1%	14%	83%	70%	90%	\$22.46
Computer & Mathematical	160	0%	2%	62%	61%	6%	\$30.26
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	159	8%	52%	12%	11%	10%	\$14.42
Protective Service	126	56%	42%	16%	28%	88%	\$17.53
Life, Physical & Social Sciences	96	1%	6%	100%	99%	98%	\$22.86

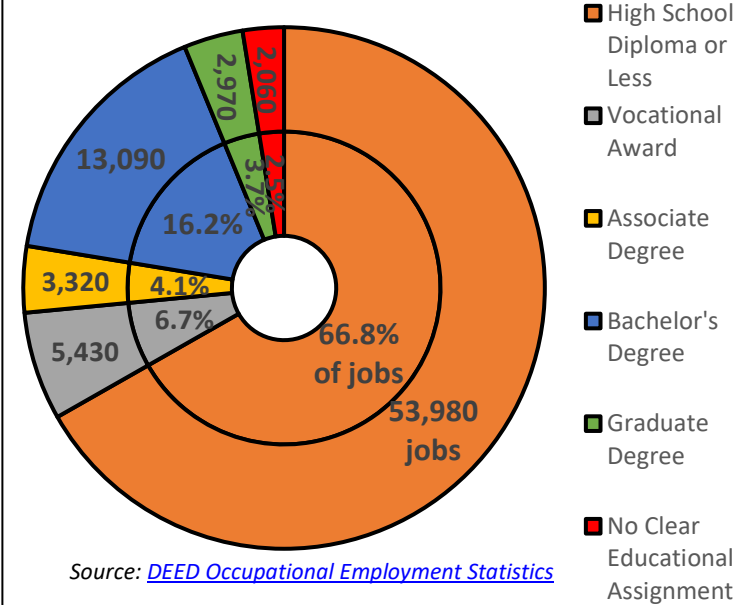
Source: [DEED Job Vacancy Survey, 2nd Qtr. 2020](#)

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Despite the recent job vacancy data, DEED's Occupational Employment Statistics program shows that only around one-third of current jobs held in the region require post-secondary education to enter. The other two-thirds require no more than a high school diploma, and sometimes less. However, some amount of on-the-job training is often needed (Figure 14).

Certain careers – such as dentists, lawyers, and teachers – require a college education, while other jobs – including cost estimators, sales representatives, and correctional officers – do not. College is an excellent way to move up career ladders and open windows of opportunity to fields that would otherwise be closed, such as nursing or engineering. Many of these occupations offer high wages and are in high demand in the marketplace. While education is typically a worthwhile investment, college can be expensive – with average annual expenses ranging between \$14,500 and almost \$50,000 per year in Minnesota. For those who go to college, choice of major matters – different programs lead to different jobs that earn different amounts of money.

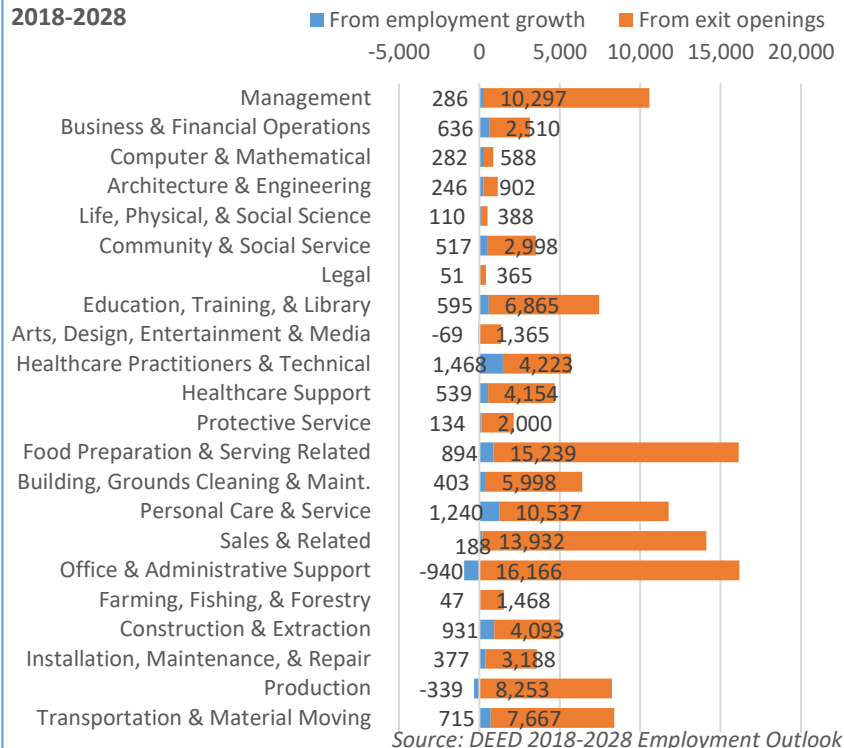
Figure 14. Northwest Minnesota Share of Jobs by Educational Requirements, 2020



EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Overall, the Northwest Planning Region is projected to grow 3.2% from 2018 to 2028, a gain of 8,311 new jobs. In addition, the region is also expected to need 123,196 replacement openings to fill jobs left vacant by retirements and other career changers. Production, personal care and service, construction and extraction, healthcare support, healthcare practitioners, and building, grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations are expected to see the most new growth. Arts, design, entertainment and media, sales and related, and office and administrative support occupations are expected to decline but every occupational group will show some future demand through replacement openings (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Northwest Minnesota Employment Projections, 2018-2028



OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND

According to DEED's [Occupations in Demand](#) tool, there are nearly 450 occupations in demand (OID) in Northwest Minnesota, and about 250 occupations are showing relatively high demand. Most OID require a high school diploma or less, and less than one-third require a bachelor's degree or higher. While OID exist in every sector, the region's major industries are well represented as many of the jobs are concentrated in health care, education, transportation, retail sales and other related industries (Table 12).

Table 12. 2020 Occupations in Demand by Education Level, Northwest Minnesota

High School or Less	Vocational Training	Associate Degree	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners (\$29,059)	Nursing Assistants (\$33,192)	Registered Nurses (\$70,869)	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education (\$55,653)
Personal Care Aides (\$27,537)	Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses (\$44,853)	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians (\$35,815)	Secondary School Teachers (\$57,557)
Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material (\$33,677)	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics (\$43,383)	Surgical Technologists (\$50,177)	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term (\$36,299)
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary (\$31,147)	Computer User Support Specialists (\$48,506)	Computer Network Support Specialists (\$60,416)	Accountants and Auditors (\$59,318)
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (\$45,816)	Dental Assistants (\$44,363)	Electrical and Electronic Engineering Techs (\$50,325)	Education Administration (\$101,280)
Pharmacy Technicians (\$35,018)	Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Programmers (\$62,623)	Agricultural and Food Science Technicians (\$38,083)	General Internal Medicine Physicians (N/A)
Interviewers, Except Eligibility and Loan (\$32,542)	Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics (\$35,744)	Civil Engineering Techs (\$63,159)	Market Research Analysts & Marketing Spec. (\$53,033)
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids (\$30,581)	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics (\$59,788)	Forest and Conservation Techs (\$49,367)	Nurse Practitioners (\$117,222)
Miscellaneous Assemblers (\$38,150)	Health Information Technologists, Registrars (\$56,465)	Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers (\$65,205)	Career/Technical Education Teachers (\$57,777)
Operating Engineers (\$50,500)	Electricians (\$57,871)	Industrial Engineering Techs (\$46,625)	Rehabilitation Counselors (\$34,434)

Source: [DEED Occupations in Demand](#)

ECONOMY

INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

According to DEED's [Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages \(QCEW\) program](#), Region 4 was home to 7,055 business establishments providing 86,341 covered jobs through 2020, with a total payroll that exceeded \$3.9 billion. That was 3.2 % of total employment in the state of Minnesota. Average annual wages were \$45,531 in the region, which was about \$18,600 lower than the average annual wage statewide (Table 13).

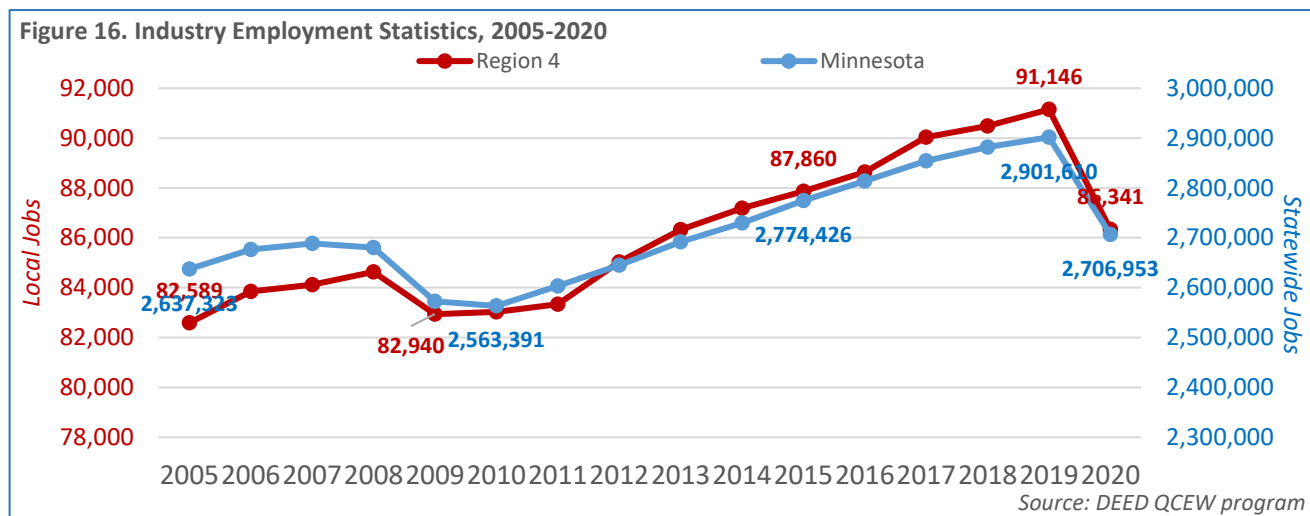
Table 13. EDR 4-West Central Industry Employment, 2020

Geography	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Total Payroll	Average Annual Wage	2015-2020		2019-2020	
					Change in Jobs	Percent Change	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
EDR 4-West Central	7,055	86,341	\$3,931,228,147	\$45,531	-1,519	-1.7%	-4,805	-5.3%
Becker Co.	1,050	13,719	\$576,627,504	\$42,031	-429	-3.0%	-929	-6.3%
Clay Co.	1,407	18,405	\$850,033,433	\$46,185	-126	-0.7%	-984	-5.1%
Douglas Co.	1,420	18,426	\$874,342,358	\$47,452	+209	+1.1%	-938	-4.8%
Grant Co.	260	1,816	\$77,929,713	\$42,913	-105	-5.5%	-94	-4.9%
Otter Tail Co.	1,833	21,649	\$954,840,761	\$44,106	-648	-2.9%	-1,192	-5.2%
Pope Co.	370	4,223	\$198,616,958	\$47,032	-63	-1.5%	-266	-5.9%
Stevens Co.	357	5,330	\$277,856,553	\$52,131	-110	-2.0%	-190	-3.4%
Traverse Co.	153	1,111	\$42,496,261	\$38,250	+55	+5.2%	-65	-5.5%
Wilkin Co.	205	1,660	\$78,484,606	\$47,280	-301	-15.3%	-146	-8.1%
State of Minnesota	182,228	2,706,953	\$173,687,525,221	\$64,163	-67,473	-2.4%	-194,657	-6.7%

Source: [DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages \(QCEW\)](#)

In terms of employment, Otter Tail County is the largest economic center in EDR 4-West Central with 21,649 jobs at 1,833 firms. Traverse County has the smallest economy with 1,111 jobs, but had the highest growth rate since 2015, at 5.2%. Wilkin County had the greatest decrease in employment, losing 301 jobs, a 15.3% decrease. Stevens and Pope Counties had some of the highest average annual wages in the region, while Douglas County gained 210 jobs since 2015, a 1.1% increase.

Region 4 has seen employment growth over the past decade prior to the pandemic and ended 2019 with 8,206 more jobs than it had in 2009. In 2020, the region lost 4,805 jobs, a 5.3% decrease while the state declined by 6.7%. Though it lost jobs during the recession from 2008 to 2009, it had regained all those jobs by 2012. (Figure 16).



With 15,856 jobs at 701 establishments, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry employs the most workers in EDR 4-West Central. Despite losing 393 jobs in 2020, the industry had added 900 jobs since 2015, a 6.0% increase and accounts for 18.3% of total regional jobs in 2020. The industry was facing a downward trend until 2016, when 624 jobs were added and another 423 jobs were added in 2018. The majority of these gains came in Hospitals and Ambulatory Health Care Services, while Hospitals and Social Assistance had greater employment losses over the last year.

Manufacturing is the second largest industry in EDR 4, providing 12,472 jobs at 341 establishments after a decrease of 644 jobs since 2019. Despite these over the year losses, the industry had added 102 jobs since 2015, a 0.8% increase. Manufacturing also paid among the highest annual wages in EDR 4 (\$55,587), about \$10,000 more than the regional average (\$45,531). The largest sectors were Machinery Manufacturing (2,825 jobs), Food Manufacturing (2,743 jobs), and Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing (2,298 jobs). Retail Trade (10,753 jobs) and Accommodation and Food Services (6,442 jobs) combined account for 19.9% of total employment in the region, offering about one in every five jobs. However, wages are relatively low in both industries, at \$30,554 and \$16,585, respectively.

Other important industries in EDR 4 include Educational Services, Public Administration, Construction, and Wholesale Trade, which combined for more than 23,400 jobs, or 27.1% of total jobs. Due to the pandemic, five of 20 regional industries added jobs over the past year with Construction adding nearly 100 new jobs. Accommodation and Food Services and Arts Entertainment and Recreation lost nearly 20% of jobs over the last year and eight of 20 industries added jobs since 2015 led by Professional and Technical Services (Table 14).

Table 14. EDR 4-West Central Industry Employment Statistics, 2020

Region 4	2020 Annual Data				2015-2020		2019-2020	
NAICS Industry Title	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Total Payroll (\$1,000s)	Avg. Annual Wage	Change in Jobs	Percent Change	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
Total, All Industries	7,055	86,341	\$3,931,228	\$45,531	-1,519	-1.7%	-4,805	-5.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	701	15,856	\$692,524	\$43,676	+900	+6.0%	-393	-2.4%
Manufacturing	341	12,472	\$693,283	\$55,587	+102	+0.8%	-644	-4.9%
Retail Trade	902	10,753	\$328,552	\$30,554	-826	-7.1%	-401	-3.6%
Educational Services	138	8,904	\$423,122	\$47,520	-144	-1.6%	-777	-8.0%
Accommodation & Food Services	543	6,442	\$106,842	\$16,585	-1,255	-16.3%	-1,532	-19.2%
Public Administration	249	5,664	\$303,068	\$53,508	+304	+5.7%	-266	-4.5%
Construction	987	4,881	\$277,621	\$56,878	+298	+6.5%	+98	+2.0%
Wholesale Trade	270	3,956	\$256,894	\$64,938	-317	-7.4%	-146	-3.6%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunt	375	2,729	\$132,729	\$48,636	+175	+6.9%	+15	+0.6%
Other Services	640	2,589	\$75,252	\$29,066	-130	-4.8%	-310	-10.7%
Transportation & Warehousing	359	2,462	\$107,459	\$43,647	-216	-8.1%	-78	-3.1%
Finance & Insurance	401	2,185	\$139,824	\$63,993	+30	+1.4%	+15	+0.7%
Professional & Technical Services	373	1,993	\$121,196	\$60,811	+329	+19.8%	-36	-1.8%
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Svcs.	273	1,764	\$64,183	\$36,385	-271	-13.3%	5	+0.3%
Information	102	995	\$54,533	\$54,807	-30	-2.9%	-43	-4.1%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	154	958	\$16,071	\$16,776	-170	-15.1%	-235	-19.7%
Utilities	24	668	\$62,901	\$94,163	-24	-3.5%	-20	-2.9%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	188	592	\$26,072	\$44,040	+28	+5.0%	+0	+0.0%
Management of Companies	18	344	\$41,207	\$119,789	-288	-45.6%	-70	-16.9%
Mining	20	130	\$7,893	\$60,714	-13	-9.1%	+9	+7.4%

Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program

INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

According to DEED's Quarterly Employment Demographics (QED) program, the workforce in the region was aging over the past 10 years. Over one-quarter (25.5%) of workers in the region were 55 years or older, compared to 21.5% statewide and just 22% in the region one decade earlier. In contrast, the percentage of teenaged workers was falling and wages were going up for younger workers (Table 15).

As noted above, wages were climbing across the board for all workers due to rising demand and a tight labor market. While wages were still lowest for the youngest and oldest workers who tend to fill lower-skilled, less-than-fulltime jobs in industries like retail trade and accommodation and food services, these two age groups enjoyed the fastest percentage increase in wages from 2009 to 2019. Wages were highest for workers between 45 and 64 years of age, and males worked more hours than females, though the gap was narrowing.

Table 15. Workforce Demographics by Age Group and Gender, Total of All Industries, 2009-2019

EDR 4-West Central	Percentage of Workers		Percent of Workers, Minnesota		Median Hourly Wage		Median Hours Worked (Per Qtr.)	
	2019	2009	2019	2009	2019	2009	2019	2009
Total, all ages	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	\$17.67	\$13.02	394	378
19 years & under	7.6%	9.4%	6.0%	6.5%	\$11.02	\$7.59	107	116
20 to 24 years	10.5%	11.9%	10.1%	11.1%	\$14.54	\$10.00	266	247
25 to 44 years	39.3%	36.3%	43.2%	42.7%	\$20.00	\$14.64	458	443
45 to 54 years	17.1%	22.4%	18.7%	23.0%	\$21.54	\$15.95	480	478
55 to 64 years	18.5%	15.1%	16.9%	13.5%	\$20.22	\$15.34	475	441
65 years & over	7.0%	4.8%	5.1%	3.3%	\$15.70	\$11.08	213	192
Male	47.7%	45.3%	49.1%	49.0%	\$20.09	\$14.97	480	460
Female	52.3%	54.7%	50.9%	51.0%	\$16.61	\$11.91	346	325

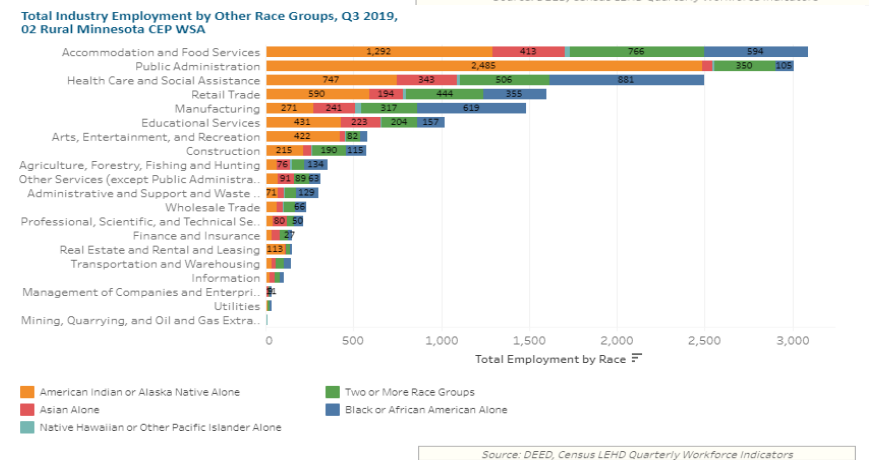
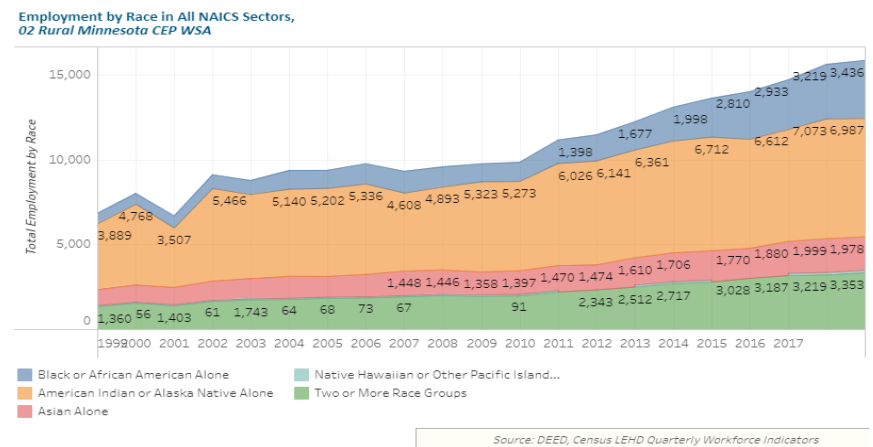
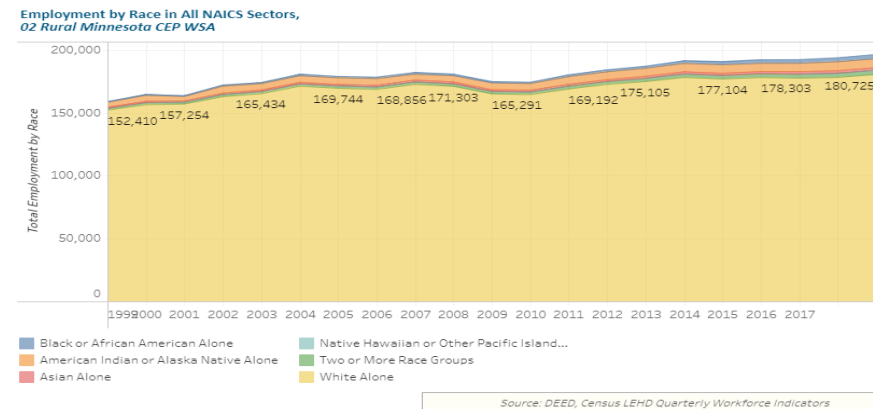
Source: DEED Quarterly Employment Demographics

While people of color make up 9.4% of the overall population, they held 8.1% of total jobs in the Rural Minnesota CEP Workforce Development Area, according to data from the Quarterly Workforce Indicators program. Through the third quarter of 2019, that equaled 15,905 workers of color, compared to 180,725 White Alone workers. Workers of color held just 4.9% of total jobs in the WDA in 2000, indicating a significant increase in employment since 2000.

In sum, workers of color have filled an additional 7,872 jobs in the WDA since 2000, accounting for about one-quarter of new jobs added. With 6,987 jobs, American Indian or Alaska Natives were the largest group of color in the WDA's economy, after gaining 3,889 jobs since 2000. The next largest group was Two or More Races, who held 3,353 jobs in 2019 after more than doubling since 2000. Black or African Americans held 3,436 jobs in the area, increasing 446% from 2000. With 1,978 jobs in 2019, Asians experienced a gain of 1,038 or doubled employment. Finally, Hispanic or Latino workers accounted for 6,442 jobs or 3.4% of the total workforce and increased 162% from 2000.

Most sectors in the Workforce Development Area are non-diverse, but there are a couple industries that rely more heavily on workers of color. For example, 23.5% of the Public Administration workforce is people of color, consisting of 82.5% American Indian or Alaska Native Alone workers. Likewise, 19.3% of the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation and 15% of Accommodation and Food Services workforces were people of color. The largest number of workers of color (3,091) were employed in Accommodation and Food Services, Public Administration, and Health Care and Social Services (see Figure 17).

Figure 17. Employment by Race Statistics for Rural Minnesota CEP Workforce Development Area



2019 data is for Qs 1-3. Source: DEED, Census LEHD Quarterly Workforce Indicators
https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/maqda.olson/viz/QWI-Race_byWSA_2019/Story1

INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS

The 26-county Northwest Planning Area is projected to grow 3.2% from 2018 to 2028, a gain of 8,311 new jobs. The largest and fastest growing industry is expected to be health care and social assistance, which may account for one-half of the total projected growth in the region by 2028. The region is also expected to see significant employment growth in construction, public administration, accommodation and food services, and educational services. In contrast, information is projected to decrease in employment by 15% and arts, entertainment, and recreation and manufacturing are also projected to decline by 100 jobs over the next 10 years (Table 16).

Table 16. Northwest Industry Projections, 2018-2028

Industry	Estimated Employment 2018	Projected Employment 2028	Percent Change 2018-2028	Numeric Change 2018-2028
Total, All Industries	263,134	271,445	+3.2%	+8,311
Health Care & Social Assistance	38,050	42,165	+10.8%	+4,115
Manufacturing	29,207	29,064	-0.5%	-143
Retail Trade	28,148	28,190	+0.1%	+42
Public Administration	23,300	23,980	+2.9%	+680
Educational Services	23,141	23,679	+2.3%	+538
Accommodation & Food Services	20,661	21,248	+2.8%	+587
Wholesale Trade	12,153	12,545	+3.2%	+392
Construction	10,281	11,330	+10.2%	+1,049
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	10,196	10,174	-0.2%	-22
Transportation & Warehousing	6,934	7,284	+5.0%	+350
Finance & Insurance	6,003	6,287	+4.7%	+284
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunt	5,627	5,766	+2.5%	+139
Professional & Technical Services	4,771	5,123	+7.4%	+352
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	4,570	4,416	-3.4%	-154
Administrative & Waste Services	4,369	4,978	+13.9%	+609
Information	2,506	2,128	-15.1%	-378
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	1,473	1,502	+2.0%	+29
Utilities	1,185	1,155	-2.5%	-30
Management of Companies	847	1,020	+20.4%	+173
Mining	206	237	+15.0%	+31

Source: DEED 2018-2028 Employment Outlook

NONEMPLOYER ESTABLISHMENTS

Region 4 was home to 18,377 self-employed businesses or “nonemployers” in 2018, which are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as “businesses without paid employees that are subject to federal income tax, originating from tax return information of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).” Like covered employment, Region 4 saw a steady increase in nonemployers over the past decade, responding to economic changes. In sum, the region gained 501 nonemployers from 2008 to 2018, a 2.8% decrease. Otter Tail County had the most nonemployers in 2018, but Clay County was the fastest growing the last decade. These non-employers generated sales receipts of over \$878 million in 2018 (Table 17).

Table 17. Nonemployer Statistics, 2018

	2018		2008-2018	
	Number of Firms	Receipts (\$1,000s)	Change in Firms	Percent Change
EDR 4	18,377	\$878,913	+501	+2.8%
Becker Co.	2,858	\$155,587	-172	-5.7%
Clay Co.	4,243	\$168,691	+499	+13.3%
Douglas Co.	3,404	\$172,050	+86	+2.6%
Grant Co.	547	\$24,394	-34	-5.9%
Otter Tail Co.	4,860	\$228,188	+48	+1.0%
Pope Co.	1,029	\$45,565	+28	+2.8%
Stevens Co.	669	\$29,878	+12	+1.8%
Traverse Co.	281	\$11,188	-10	-3.4%
Wilkin Co.	486	\$43,372	+44	+10.0%
Minnesota	416,487	\$19,994,802	29,503	7.6%

Source: U.S. Census, Nonemployer Statistics program

CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

Finally, one of the most important industries in Region 4 is agriculture, with 7,857 farms producing nearly \$2.1 billion in the market value of products sold in 2017, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Region 4 had 11% of the state’s farms, and 11% of the state’s total market value, led by Otter Tail, Stevens, and Clay County, which were all among the top 30 counties in the state for the market value of products sold (Table 18). Region 4 has had a 26.6% decline in market value over the past 5 years.

Table 18. Census of Agriculture, 2017

	Number of Farms	Market Value of Products Sold	State Rank
EDR 4	7,857	\$2,015,632,000	4
Becker Co.	943	\$174,531,000	53
Clay Co.	694	\$277,750,000	27
Douglas Co.	960	\$100,345,000	59
Grant Co.	524	\$190,286,000	46
Otter Tail Co.	2,544	\$349,919,000	16
Pope Co.	837	\$199,295,000	44
Stevens Co.	553	\$327,441,000	21
Traverse Co.	411	\$210,468,000	41
Wilkin Co.	391	\$185,597,000	50
Minnesota	68,822	\$18,395,390,000	

Source: 2017 Census of Agriculture